

Kentucky Marker Papers

Primary – Grade 12

~ without Annotations ~



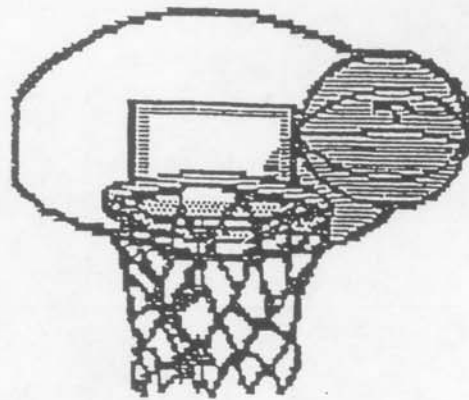
Kentucky Department
of Education

Winter 2002, reprint

Gene Wilhoit, Commissioner
Kentucky Department of Education

LETTERS

GRADE 4 - LETTER



Dear Dad,

Wow! I just had a wonderful idea! You know how we scream at the refs when they make bad calls in a Kentucky basketball game? Isn't that fun? I really love my Kentucky shirt. I would love to wear it to a game. So what I'm asking is, will you take me to see a Kentucky game? I mean Dad, we're soul Kentucky brothers!

You're probably going to say no because it's too hard to get the tickets. But I have the solution! Do you remember the last time you talked to Preacher N. and he gave you the tickets? Well, you could ask again since it's been awhile.

In case you're wondering how difficult it would be to get good seats, remember you know a lot of people who have. So, you just can't give up. If you don't try, you won't get anywhere.

If you think the tickets would cost too much, I would be willing to pay for my own ticket, because I have about \$250.00 in cash. I think we could afford it easily then.

I know that you work late, but you could ask for time off. You have a nice boss. I don't think that he'd mind.

If I have a game, we could just call our coach. He'd let me go. I like to play basketball but Kentucky games are more exciting.

I can see it now. We're on the front row where we can see the players jam, hit three's, and all of the other good things that they do. We are screaming at the refs and booing the other team. But my favorite thing of all is watching Kentucky win.

Your Son,
J

GRADE 5 - LETTER

147 Cox Thomas
Anywhere, KY 42274
Feb. 26, 1999

Dear Friend,

Don't be scared about coming to . You will like it here. It is probably as good as your old school or better. Here are some reasons I think you will enjoy my school, Elementary.

You might think that there is nothing to do on our playground. Wrong! It is a great place to play baseball, football, basketball, and soccer. It has swings and slides. There are lots of things to climb on, like monkey bars and chains. It even has a blacktop to play on when it rains. It is a huge playground and has a lot to offer.

You probably think the day is boring except for recess. Well sorry, because you are incorrect again. The teachers make it fun to learn. Each classroom has at least two computers. In addition, we have a new computer lab. It has 27 new computers in it. There are also many special classes. We have Physical Education, or PE, once or twice a week. That is where we play sports and games, like kickball or steal the bacon. We also have Art, where we make drawings or paintings and study the history of art. Another class is Library, where we check out books, draw, and sometimes watch movies about certain books. We also have Music. This is where we sing songs and learn how to read music. Fifth and sixth graders can also participate in choir. Another class is

Guidance, where we talk about having friends and watch movies. And by the way, if you are worried about not having any friends, there are plenty of friendly kids at

. The academic team is a fun and challenging program for which every fourth and fifth grader should strive. We compete against different schools in the four categories of Quick Recall, Written Assessment, Future Problem Solving, and Written Composition. Project Challenge, or PC, is for kids who need harder work outside the classroom. There we do all sorts of brain teasers and special projects.

You might be scared of the teachers. Guess what? There is no need to be! None of our teachers are from the black lagoon. We have a new principal who comes up with lots of good ideas. Also, in my five years at I have learned something every day. Whether it is, "be good or get into trouble," or how to do a certain math problem, I am always learning.

You also might be horrified by our food, but we have the best "School Food" around. My favorite foods are their hamburgers and pizza. We have a fast line that gives us plenty of time to eat and talk. Most kids do buy their lunch at school, which proves that has great food.

These are just some of the reasons you should like . Between the playground, the food, the special classes, and the staff, you should like our school. I'll tell you one thing: I love Elementary School.

Sincerely,

GRADE 6 - LETTER

3000 Maple Drive
Anytown, KY 40000
December 10, 1998

Mr.
Anytown Middle School
5400 Elm Street
Anytown, KY 40000

Dear Mr.

Hello. I am a student in the sixth grade. I am furious about the "Trick" the seventh and eighth grade pulled when we brought in our cans for the can food collection. They received extra credit points for the cans that they brought in. They were selfish and I don't think they deserve to win the prize that was promised to the winner. (The movie they got to pick and watch during class.) So I want you to make completely sure that the teachers don't do this next year.

I feel that the seventh and eighth grades were selfish on deciding to bring in cans. They didn't care how it would feed homeless people and give them food to eat on Christmas. They just cared about two things----- their grades, and themselves. But to me that is not what charity is all about. I thought that charity was about giving but not getting back. Please correct me if I am wrong, but I don't think that I am.

Another reason is if one person brings in 50-100 cans their grade won't reflect on their knowledge, on what they really have learned this year. Also a D or F student could bring in "X" amount of cans and move their grade to a passing one. That doesn't seem fair to me. The sixth grade wouldn't have that chance for the other two grades broke the rules and played unfair. But to be honest who would you rather have as the students in your school? Students that have high or average grades but are not knowledgeable of what they have been thought. Or kids that have average or below average grades but can still carry on an intelligent conversation about what they have learned in the course of that year? I would rather have the latter choice. Plus if you bring in all of those cans you won't get a deserving grade. You could get an A yet deserve a C. That doesn't seem right. Their parents actually think that they are doing better because they are getting higher grades than normal. The student might be happy now, but what happens next year and they have a problem on a test but they don't understand because that was the time that they brought in cans to get a better grade. They would get it wrong.

My last reason is the sixth grade is the only grade that deserves to win. We are the only grade that "PLAYED FAIR" and didn't receive anything for the cans that we brought in. We simply didn't need anything. We just did it because we knew that we would be so grateful if we were homeless and a school like ours gave us food to eat over the Christmas holiday. And that, to us is what charity is all about.

I know that this school is the best and that you are the best principal. Therefore, you will make the right decision and stop this from happening next year.

Your student.

GRADE 7 - LETTER

P. O. Box
Lively, KY 41231
March 26, 1998

Denny Warren, Principal
Lively Middle School
P. O. Box
Lively, KY 41231

Dear Mr. Warren,

Just as every ship must have a good captain and every army must have a good general, every good school needs a good principal. You, Mr. Warren are that principal. Even though I have only known you for two years, I recognize your abilities to be a great leader. Communication skills are now and have always been, traits of all great leaders. It is evident that you have these qualities in you. I have noticed the way students and teachers are able to speak to you about every situation. That is why I did not hesitate to write you this letter.

Mr. Warren, this year I have spent endless hours in the computer lab working on portfolios, and during this time a problem has come to my attention. Did you know that more than one half of the computers in the lab are old and outdated? This has become a

real problem for me, because as you know, all seventh grade students must complete a writing portfolio. Because of the large number of students using the computers, sometimes I am forced to use the old ones. The older computers do not have the updated technology or the dependability like the new computers.

Mr. Warren, you may not realize that the newer computers have many valuable functions. One such function is the toolbar, which this feature allows students the privilege of changing the size of the print this is called "font". It also has a "cut and paste" feature which helps in the area of editing. Another handy tool that is only found on the newer computers is the choice of style in which words are printed. These are only a few of the features that are found on the new computers and not on the old ones. This is why we need to purchase more new computers.

As a result of having older computers in the computer lab, many problems are occurring. Because of the unreliability of the old computers, student writings are being erased and lost. Therefore, students are spending valuable time retyping portfolio entries. Some of the older computers at times do not even work. This means that students have must share computers. When this happens, students get behind schedule and are rushed to meet deadlines. The teachers become frustrated and to be honest, so do we. You might say this tries our patience. The old computers are

definitely an inconvenience to all students especially those who are completing portfolios.

Mr. Warren, my solution to this problem is that all the older computers be placed inside the classrooms, and replaced with new ones in the computer lab. I am sure all of the teachers would be happy to receive computers in their rooms. The computer lab would be free of broken-down, worn out machines. That are incapable of doing the work that the kids need to have done.

Mr. Warren, money is always a concern when doing any kind of change. But when it comes to the quality education a student receives, money should not be the issue! I have heard from various sources that one of the KERA goals is that all students should have access to technology. I am sure they meant good, up-to-date equipment. If this goal is to be met something must be done. There are many ways to obtain funding for new computers, one of which is writing grants. Mr. Warren, I know you can find someone from your largely qualified staff to do this. I have heard that our own Mr. Demling has experience in this area. Mr. Warren don't just try one avenue though, because as my granny always says, "There is more than one way to skin a cat." Sometimes large companies have contests and give away new computers. Where there is a will there is a way!

Mr. Warren, my solution is very simple and would be easy to implement. It is a simple case of man power. All that needs to be done is the old computers need to be removed and new ones installed. Also, writing grants is a task that takes a little time and effort but renders a great reward. Both of these solutions are simple and easy and only take a little bit of work.

In conclusion Mr. Warren, a real problem does exist in the computer lab. We can no longer hide our heads in the sand. The lab consists of too many old computers and not nearly enough new and updated ones. Although this is a major problem it is not an unsolvable one. I know you, being the great leader and the great principal you are, will find a way to help all of the future portfolio students. Remember, money is not the issue Perseverance is the issue! Good luck and remember your students are counting on you.!

Sincerely,

GRADE 8 - LETTER

4212 H T Drive
_____, KY 40000
March 3, 1999

SBDM Council
_____, Middle School
3100 W Road
_____, KY 40000

Dear SBDM Council,

Need a break from those khaki pants? Oh, that's right. You don't wear uniforms. Because you have the freedom to chose what you wear, I guess you might have some difficulties understanding how the students feel.

_____ Middle has adopted a new uniforms code since the beginning of the school year. Most students last year objected to the idea, but I guess it didn't affect the decision made by adults and teachers. Even though the students are following the new policy quite well, most of them aren't much into it.

I personally think having a Dress-Down Day would be the best compromise for both the school staff and the students. We'd follow the uniforms policy most of the time, but would have the opportunity to express ourselves for a limited number of days. I think the students deserve to have at least one day of freedom each month or even each week.

Since school has begun, the majority of the students have followed the uniform code and obeyed the rules. Don't you think we deserve at least one chance to dress ourselves the way we want? It surely would make the students feel better to know that the school actually listened to their opinions.

Having Dress-Down Days could help raise money for our school. In many private schools, each student pays a certain amount of money (no more than \$1) to dress down for a day. If the students don't want to pay, then they would just stay in uniforms. I seriously think that the school staff should consider this idea very carefully.

I know that administrators have reservations. Mr. _____, a counselor, thinks that having a Dress-Down Day wouldn't have a positive effect. He's concerned that the students won't be in uniform the day after Dress-Down Day.

Ms. _____, the 8-2 team leader, strongly disagrees with the idea. "I like the dress code," she states. "I believe in the saying, 'Dress for success.'" Ms. _____ has also worked at _____ Middle School and has experienced a negative side of Dress-Down Day. "The behavior of the students completely changed," she remembers.

As you know, there are always two sides to every story.

Kids in middle school are very sensitive. They need certain things to help them grow into unique individuals. School, of course, is a big part of a teenager's life. Taking away the freedom of expressing individual creativity is a bad idea. Our school has already taken it away, but giving the students one day of freedom would have a great impact on their inner selves.

Have you seen the display board on the 8th grade floor? It says, "The clothes don't make the person, the brain makes the person." My point is proven in this quote. Even though wearing a uniform won't change the person, I know it won't help to argue over the subject of wearing uniforms now, because the

decision already has been made. I just hope that you would consider us the students seriously and give us a break.

Remember, clothes don't make the person.

Sincerely,

5000 Elm Street
Any Town, KY 40000
March 1, 1996

_____ School Board
2102 Oak Street
Any Town, KY 40000

Dear School Board Members:

The gymnasium at _____ High School is not conveniently accessible to persons relying solely on a wheelchair as a means of transportation.

There is only one handicapped parking space in the proximity of the high school, and this parking space is often occupied by persons not requiring the convenience of handicapped parking. Surely, the available number of handicapped spaces at _____ High falls far short of the recommendations set forth by the A.D.A.

Furthermore, there are only four wheelchair accessible entrances to the main school building from the street. None of these is in close proximity to the gymnasium. At night time, only one of the four entrances is available by a wheelchair user. This entrance, being adjacent to the main lobby of the school building, is frequently blocked with the car of an inconsiderate driver, thus rendering all wheelchair accessible entrances to the school unapproachable by an unassisted wheelchair user.

In the event that the only ramp to the school is approachable by a wheelchair, the disabled person requiring the assistance of a ramp would have to travel the same distance, if not farther, than most able-bodied persons.

Even then, the concrete walkways to the gym are not easily navigated by a wheelchair user. The ground beneath the walkways has shifted, leaving the pathways to the gymnasium in poor shape. I have fallen out of my wheelchair twice on these walkways.

The ramp connecting the walkways to the gymnasium is also badly in need of repairs. The base of this ramp has been chipped so severely that one would call it nothing short of a small curb. Assuming that this ramp could be accessed by a wheelchair, the user could not reach the top of the ramp due to its steep incline.

Craig Hospital, T.E.A.R. Hospital, the Lakeshore Foundation, and every other rehabilitation facility that I have heard of suggest that "any ramp designed for use by a wheelchair should provide one foot of length for every inch of rise" thus yielding an incline of a little over eight degrees. It would not surprise me if the presiding ramps at _____ High School are three times steeper than the ramp incline suggested by these prestigious rehabilitation facilities.

I would like to propose a solution to the problems addressed above. There is currently somewhat of an accessible ramp leading to the gymnasium. It leads to a door next to the girls' bathroom. If this door was open, a chair could get inside with ease. But, this ramp is even farther from the handicapped parking space than the ramp in poor condition.

I propose to build another ramp from the road to the sidewalk on Glen Cove Drive, nearest to the easily accessible ramp as possible. I also propose to designate a parking space on either side of this ramp as handicapped parking. Furthermore, one of these spaces should be deemed as "wheelchair only." Your approval would greatly facilitate the ease and enjoyment of all my trips to the high school gymnasium for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Senior Student